

FAST FACTS

Bonytail (*Gila elegans*)



ã Joseph R. Tomelleri

Distinguishing Features:

- Dark gray or olive colored back, silver sides and white belly
- Small head, large fins, streamlined body that becomes pencil-thin before the tail
- Generally 16 to 18 inches long but have been known to reach 22 inches

Specifics:

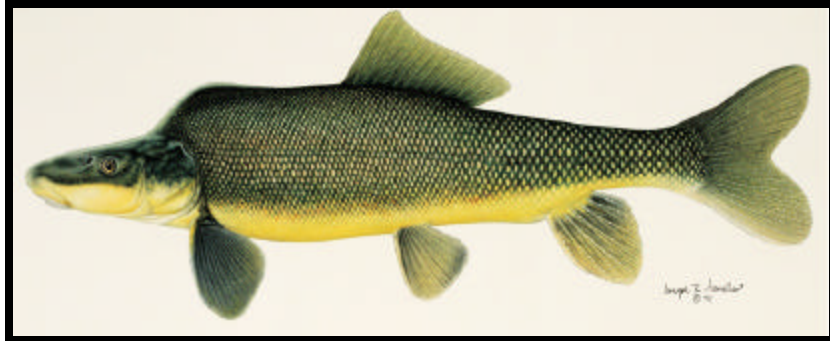
- Thought to have evolved 3 to 5 million years ago
- Have been known to live nearly 50 years
- Capable of spawning at an age of 5 to 7 years; spawns in spring and early summer
- Feeds on insects and plant matter
- Natural habitat is thought to be in large rivers of the Colorado River Basin particularly canyon bound reaches

Status:

- Given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1980; listed as endangered
- Endangered under Colorado law as of 1976
- Listed as protected under Utah law as of 1974
- Rarest of the four endangered fish
- No known reproducing populations in the wild
- Populations are being reintroduced through stocking in the Colorado, Green and Yampa rivers

FAST FACTS

Razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*)



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Distinguishing Features:

- Brownish-green upper body with a yellow to white colored belly
- Abrupt, sharp edged hump on back behind head
- Fleshy lips used for sucking up food
- Generally 16 to 28 inches long weighing less than 7 pounds but have been known to reach 36 inches and 13 pounds

Specifics:

- Now limited to 25% of historic range
- Thought to have evolved 3 million years ago
- Have been known to live 40 years or more
- Capable of spawning at an age of 3 to 4 years; spawns in spring
- Feeds primarily on insects, plankton, and plant matter
- Natural habitat is in the Colorado River Basin
- Valued as food by early settlers and miners of the Colorado River Basin
- Hump is believed to provide stability in turbulent flow

Status:

- Given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1991; listed as endangered
- Endangered under Colorado law as of 1979
- Listed as protected under Utah law as of 1973
- Existing population comprised primarily of adult fish because few young survive
- Populations are being reintroduced in the Colorado, Gunnison, Green and San Juan rivers

FAST FACTS

Humpback chub (*Gila cypha*)



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Distinguishing Features:

- Gray or olive colored back, silver sides and white belly
- Spawning adults are tinged with rosy-red gill coverings and fins
- Long snout that protrudes over the lower jaw; prominent hump on back behind head; large, streamlined fins
- Generally 14 to 16 inches long but have been known to reach 20 inches

Specifics:

- Thought to have evolved 3 to 5 million years ago
- Have been known to live nearly 30 years
- Capable of spawning at an age of 2 to 3 years; spawns in spring and early summer
- Feeds primarily on insects, plankton, and plant matter
- Natural habitat is in canyon bound reaches of the Colorado River Basin

Status:

- Listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as of 1964
- Given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1973
- Endangered under Colorado law as of 1976
- Listed as protected under Utah law as of 1973
- 6 known existing populations
- Populations appear stable but small

FAST FACTS

Colorado pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*)



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Distinguishing Features:

- Olive-green and gold back, silvery-white belly
- Generally grow 18 to 22 inches long weighing 2 to 4 pounds but have been historically known to reach up to 6 feet and 80 pounds or more. Fish larger than three feet are common
- Torpedo shaped body, upper jaw extends to or beyond the middle of the eye

Specifics:

- Range currently limited to the upper Colorado River Basin
- Largest species of minnow native to North America
- Thought to have evolved 3 to 5 million years ago
- Have been known to live 40 years
- Capable of spawning at an age of 5 to 6 years; spawns in late spring and summer
- Known to migrate more than 200 miles to spawn
- Young feed primarily on insects; adults feed mainly on other fish
- Natural habitat is in the Colorado River Basin
- Valued as food by early settlers and miners of the Colorado River Basin
- Known as the "white salmon" or "Colorado salmon" by settlers

Status:

- Listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as of 1967
- Given full protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1973
- Listed as endangered under Colorado law in 1976; downlisted to threatened in 1998
- Listed as protected under Utah law as of 1973
- Populations are reproducing in the wild in the Green and Colorado rivers
- Populations are stable and increasing in the Green and Colorado rivers
- Small population present in the San Juan River Basin